

Opposition to Hagel Nomination Grows

More than 17,000 people have responded to a Christians United for Israel (CUFI) action alert launched recently asking individuals to email their Senators in opposition to the potential nomination of former Senator Chuck Hagel as Secretary of Defense.

The text of the email sent to Senators is as follows:

As a member of Christians United for Israel, I'm writing to ask you to publicly oppose the nomination of Senator Chuck Hagel to be our next Secretary of Defense. The easiest time to stop Hagel's nomination is before it's ever made.

The greatest threat to our security and that of our front-line ally Israel is a rising and potentially nuclear Iran. Yet Senator Hagel has demonstrated a troubling blind spot towards this threat. In the Senate, he repeatedly opposed economic sanctions on Iran intended to stop its nuclear program.

He also opposed recognizing Iran's Revolutionary Guard as a terrorist organization. Finally, he refused to support efforts to further isolate Iran's number one puppet: Hezbollah.

As a combat veteran, Senator Hagel deserves our respect. As a former senator, he deserves your cordiality. But America deserves someone who recognizes the greatest threats facing us to lead the Defense Department.

Please oppose the nomination of Senator Hagel for Secretary of Defense.

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than 1.1 million members, spans all fifty states and reaches millions with its message. Each year, CUFI holds hundreds of pro-Israel events in cities around the country. And each July, thousands of pro-Israel Christians gather in Washington, D.C. to participate in the CUFI Washington Summit and make their voices heard in support of Israel and the Jewish people.

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Christian Persecution Hits Fever Pitch

Militant Islam is wiping out Christianity in the Muslim Middle East, according to a new study by the British think tank *Civitas*.

“Christianity is in serious danger of being wiped out in its biblical heartlands because of Islamic oppression,” wrote journalist Rupert Shortt. Israel, the only country in the region where Jews, Muslim and Christians are free to practice their religion, was not covered in the report.

Israel opened up churches and other holy sites to Christians in Judea and Samaria and all of Jerusalem after Jordan fled the areas in the Six-Day War in 1967. Jordan prohibited Christians from visiting the sites during its occupation of the area from 1947 to 1967.

Since the rise of the Islamic Hamas movement, (Arab) Christians have been on the run in Israel, but mainstream

media have tried to blame Israel for the diminishing Christian community, particularly in Bethlehem. Violence against Christians by Muslims in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, outside of Israel, has been ignored by “blind” politicians, largely because it is politically incorrect to criticize Muslims and then risk being accused of “racism.”

Converts to Christianity often are killed in Saudi Arabia, Mauritania and Iran, the report said, and converts who remain alive may be subjected to heavy legal punishment. Muslim countries are the most widespread offenders of freedom of religion, and Civitas estimates that between a half and two-thirds of Christians in the Middle East have left the region or have been killed in the past century.

Numerous Housing Units Approved for Jerusalem Suburb

More than 2,000 additional housing units have been approved for a Jerusalem suburb, in a move sure to set off another firestorm of protest in the international community.

The Interior Ministry’s planning committee gave its approval Wednesday for a project to build 2,610 new homes in a suburb of Jerusalem located in an area restored to the city during the 1967 Six Day-War. As with all of Judea and Samaria, any part of Jerusalem seized by Jordan during the 1948 War of Independence and held until 1967 is claimed by the Palestinian Authority for its hoped-for state.

In particular, the PA has claimed the parts of Jerusalem that were occupied by Jordan to be used for a capital of that state. The international community and leftist organizations

support the claim. But Israel's decision to allow more construction in its capital city is about the needs of its citizens, and not about the Palestinian Authority, Housing Minister Ariel Attias asserted Wednesday.

Attias said construction in Jerusalem, Israel's capital, is the norm.

"Who didn't build in Jerusalem from the late Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin to former Prime Minister Ehud Barak? All we want is to promote building for people so that they will have a roof over their heads," Attias said.

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland on Tuesday slammed the Netanyahu government's decision to approve long-needed housing projects in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. On Tuesday, the Housing Ministry announced plans to issue tenders next week for construction of 3,000 new homes in the cities of Karnei Shomron, Efrat and Givat Ze'ev.

All three are located in areas with a large Israeli presence that would remain with the Jewish State regardless of any outcome in final status negotiations with the Palestinian Authority.

"We are deeply disappointed that Israel insists on continuing this pattern of provocative action," Nuland said. "These repeated announcements and plans of new construction run counter to the cause of peace."

JNN News Commentary

Once again, absolutely no mention is made of the recent successful move by the Palestinian Authority to establish illegitimate, Observer State status at the U.N. This crafty strategy on the part of PA leader Mahmoud Abbas, supported by all but a handful of UN nations, broke the 1993 Oslo Accord agreements signed by both PA representatives and Israel that any statehood status for the Palestinians would be reached

through negotiations between the two entities.

How can it be no international outcry has gone up against the Palestinian Authority for its obdurate refusal to display the slightest concessions towards advancing peace with Israel? There has been no outcry for the PA's outrageous demands of the Jewish state towards that end at every juncture, or for its latest U.N. move that has been as "provocative,"—in the language of Nuland—as "counter to the cause of peace," as any expansion of legitimate, decades old, Jewish communities on the part of Israel?

Should I Be Healed by Now?

Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from Cecil Murphey and Gary Roe's 2012 book, *Not Quite Healed: 40 Truths for Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*.

I'm not quite healed, but I am *being healed*.

My name is Cecil Murphey, although everyone calls me Cec (as in cease). In the fall of 1985, I began to face my sexual and physical assaults. I'm still in the process. I'm closer to total victory, but I'm not quite healed.

Someone could counter with, "You're a slow learner," or "You haven't followed Jesus closely enough."

I don't try to answer such charges. I've moved as rapidly as I know how and don't feel I have to justify anything. After more than twenty years, when I talk about my healing I say, "I'm almost healed."

I wish I could say that I'm totally healed; that would be a lie. This much I can say: I'm as straightforward and

transparent as I'm capable of being. In the recovery process, I've searched relentlessly for total healing. I don't know if that labels me quick or slow, truly open or slightly self-deceived.

Some men heal quicker than others do—we know that. But I challenge the statement of anyone who boasts of total healing from sexual abuse in eight months or a year. Or even 10 years.

I'm a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, and I've worked for several years with other former victims of sexual molestation. All of us who struggle with our past speak of a process—a long, long process. It's also an ongoing battle.

* * *

A few months ago I participated in a seminar in which one of the plenary speakers was a pastor who spoke of his abuse and that it had once made him afraid to allow anyone to get close. He said God had healed him.

As I listened, this thought raced through my brain: "He's still not going to let people get close." Then I thought perhaps I was being judgmental and silently chastised myself.

A few weeks later, another survivor and I had coffee together. He had also attended that plenary session. Without my saying a word, my friend referred to that pastor. "He shouldn't have been up there speaking," he said. "He's not healed enough himself."

How did both of us—independently—come to that same conclusion? I can't give you three reasons or any concrete analysis. Yet both of us sensed he spoke more about his *hopes* than his *reality*.

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I understand the desire for complete emotional healing. In fact, one of the things I heard myself saying after two years

of facing my abuse is, "I should be healed by now." When I spoke those words, I didn't understand the pervasiveness of molestation. I wanted to be completely free from my past abuse and to have the memories wiped away.

It doesn't work that way. It *is* a process—and the word *process* means that it doesn't happen quickly. Or as I said in one seminar, healing from abuse is a process and not an event.

First, we need to realize that sexuality involves our total selves—mind, body, emotions, and spirit. God created us that way and sexuality is a powerful force in our lives for good or for evil.

Second, our abuse took place in secret, and it happened when we were young and innocent. We lived with our hidden anguish for years. I turned fifty before my memories flooded over me and forced me to learn to cope with my painful childhood. Gary was in his mid-forties before flashbacks revealed the abusive childhood he had endured.

Here's a statement I've adapted from VoiceToday, an organization that works with survivors of sexual molestation.

A victim of murder feels no more pain; A victim of childhood sexual abuse feels pain for the rest of his life.

Anyone may challenge that last phrase, "for the rest of his life," but I believe it's true. Terrible things were done to us and it takes a long time—years—the rest of our lives—to work through the process and to undo the damage. *All our lives* is accurate because the damage is deep, painful, and we lived with our wounds a long, long time.

Deep. Painful. Those two words express why this is such a long journey. A major reason is that we continue to uncover layers of our inner lives tainted by the abuse.

* * *

Gary

Not only is healing an ongoing process, but it demands courage to survive the barrages of hurt, sorrow, and self-accusation. The more we trudge forward, the stronger we become. The scars are subterranean and insidious but there *is* healing.

At the beginning we may assume full healing is imminent—which I did—because we're unaware how severely we've been damaged or don't realize that our wounds have been festering for years.

At our core, we're sexual creatures, male and female. This is part of being created in the image of God. When others abuse us sexually, they touch us at the center of our being. Everything becomes skewed and produces a ripple effect that spreads through our entire personhood. The abuse alters the way we view ourselves, others, God, and life itself.

Here are two verses that help me understand this. "Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself" (1 Corinthians 6:18–19).

As I read Paul's words, it says that sexual sin is different from other transgressions because it has more pervasive, lasting effects than other failures.

How could healing not be difficult, excruciating, and time-consuming? We need to fight, not just for ourselves, but for our families and all the others around us who've been touched by the abuse we endured.

"I want to become a warrior against abuse," I told God, and invited him to use me in the war to fight such an invidious evil. The bigger picture of contending for other kids who couldn't stand up for themselves became a major driving force behind my desire to heal.

But I want to be clear: True, deep healing *is* spiritual warfare. Sometimes our learned and long-established behavior is our enemy. We have to fight our natural resistance. It's hard work, but well worth it, not just for us, but also for everyone we love and care about.

Abuse causes most of us to end up with little self-esteem (although some become braggarts or bullies to cover it). We were overpowered, and control often remains a big issue—fighting for it or surrendering to those who threaten us by their words or presence.

Because someone we trusted betrayed us, many of us are unable or slow to believe others. We may freeze when someone unexpectedly touches us. Some of us slide into substance abuse to deaden the pain. Sexual dysfunction of some kind is common.

This isn't an exhaustive list, but I mention these because they're symptoms of long-term issues. Even to be aware of them isn't a cure, but it's like a doctor analyzing our symptoms and prescribing the medicine.

Cecil Murphey has written or coauthored more than 100 books, including the autobiography of Franklin Graham, *Rebel With a Cause*, and the *New York Times* best-seller *90 Minutes in Heaven*.

Gary Roe has been in full-time ministry for 30 years, serving as a college minister, a church-planting missionary in Japan, a pastor in Texas and Washington. He currently works as a hospice chaplain and interim pastor in Central Texas.

CUFI Opposes Hagel for US Defense Chief

David Brog, the executive director of Christians United for Israel (CUFI), released a statement opposing the potential nomination of former Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE) as United States Secretary of Defense:

“An ascendant and potentially nuclear Iran poses the greatest security threat to American interests in the world today. Yet during his time in the Senate, Senator Hagel consistently refused to support meaningful action against Iran’s nuclear program, Iran’s terrorist Revolutionary Guard, and Iran’s chief puppet, Hezbollah. I’ve not yet heard a convincing explanation for such passivity towards this looming strategic threat. On this state of the record, I don’t think that Senator Hagel is the right person to lead the Department of Defense.”

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Andre Ward's Fight for God

Andre Ward beats up people for a living. But just because he's a born-again Christian doesn't mean he has to repent for fighting.

As a child of God—who just happens to be the undisputed WBA/WBC/*Ring Magazine* super middleweight boxing champion of the world—Ward says his motives are pure every time he steps into the ring and that he's simply doing the job with which the Lord blessed him.

"It's a heart condition," says the 28-year-old Ward, who defended his titles against light heavyweight champ Chad Dawson in Ward's hometown of Oakland, Calif., in September to run his professional record to 26-0. "If I truly was honest with myself and I intentionally and permanently wanted to hurt someone, then that would be a problem.

"It may sound like an oxymoron, but I don't have a heart to hurt anyone in the ring. I always pray for myself, my opponent and for our families' sakes that neither one of us gets hurt during a fight. That's only one of the reasons that God has blessed me so much in my life."

Ward has myriad reasons to feel that way. Not only is he on top of the boxing world in his division with three titles around his waist, he has yet to be defeated as a professional. The former Olympic gold medalist also was named *Sports Illustrated* and *Ring Magazine's* Fighter of the Year for 2011.

Above all these accolades, however, Ward is grateful for how his status as a successful athlete has allowed him to become an effective witness for Jesus Christ and a role model for youngsters. His mantra, . (Son of God), which is prominently

displayed on his trunks, is something he borrowed from Galatians 3:26, which states: "For all of you are sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ."

Blind Actor Sees Perfectly

Tom Sullivan has been physically unable to see since birth. Throughout his life, however, the author and entertainer has become accustomed to finding spiritual insight while coming to grips with his blindness. In his latest memoir, *As I See It*, he explains how he's learned to look at life from a different view.

"Most people live in a world in which they are looking at how others affect them, rather than how they affect others," said Sullivan, who lists television shows such as *M*A*S*H* and *WKRP in Cincinnati* to his acting credits along with a seven-year stint as a reporter on ABC's *Good Morning America*.

"What matters is, am I operating in God's likeness by taking a loving look at other people I meet? That's how I have tried to live. It sounds cliché, but I was once blind and now I see."

Sullivan, 65, admits his blindness produced a strong bitterness early on toward God. That changed after he was radically saved in 1973, shortly after his then 3-year-old daughter, Blythe, fell into the family swimming pool. Sullivan dove into the pool and heard air bubbles, then went down nine feet to find Blythe and was able to resuscitate her.

"Anyone else wouldn't have heard them; not because they couldn't, but because they just wouldn't," he says. "Miracles happen when ordinary people like you and me, through grace, do extraordinary things."

Sullivan engages in many activities that people of sight take for granted. He regularly enjoys downhill skiing and averages 90 for an 18-hole round of golf. These days, he can be found on the corporate lecture circuit, where he never misses an opportunity to tell others about Jesus: "I've made the decision to articulate and witness my faith in front of these companies. It's not always favorably received by some companies because they say this isn't the place for it. But I've chosen to do it anyway. You have to keep putting it out there—that's frontline faith."

Indeed, Sullivan wouldn't see it any other way.

Israeli Hero, Former IDF Chief, Dies at 68

Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, a former Israel Defense Forces chief of staff and government minister, passed away on Wednesday morning at the age of 68 at Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital in Jerusalem.

Lipkin-Shahak had been battling cancer in recent years. Earlier this week, he was hospitalized in serious condition.

Lipkin-Shahak enlisted in the IDF in 1962 and served in the paratroopers. Over the next three decades, he rose through the ranks and was appointed as the IDF's 15th chief of staff on Jan. 1, 1995, replacing Ehud Barak.

Lipkin-Shahak retired from the IDF in 1998. A year later, he was elected to the Knesset as a member of the Center Party, led by Yitzhak Mordechai. Lipkin-Shahak was appointed tourism minister and later served as transport minister.

Lipkin-Shahak resigned from the Knesset in 2001.

He is survived by his wife and five children.

Upon hearing the news of Lipkin-Shahak's death, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "Amnon was an Israeli hero who dedicated his best years to ensuring the security of Israel. His courage was also evident in the brave way that he handled his disease. He never shed an iota of his nobility, not even for a minute. On behalf of the citizens of Israel, I offer my condolences to the grieving widow, Tali, and all his family."

President Shimon Peres also issued a message of condolences.

"Ever since last Sunday, when I went to the hospital to say goodbye to my dear friend Amnon, my soul has been restless. Amnon was a true hero soldier; he carried the torch of peace.

"He was a rare individual and a learned Jew. His many students and soldiers under his command viewed him as an exceptional role model. They believed every word he said, and they flocked to his door seeking wisdom and advice."

Trade of Innocents

(Monterey Media)



Cambodia has a rich cultural history, yet the Southeast Asian country has become known as a centrum for human trafficking. *Trade of Innocents*, released last fall and now on DVD, uses the Buddhist nation as a backdrop to shine a light on the deplorable trade that ensnares 2.1 million children—many as young as age 4—each year.

Based on a true story, the movie follows an American couple

who relocate to Cambodia following the murder of their 7-year-old daughter. Determined to put a dent in the multimillion-dollar trafficking industry in Cambodia's capital city of Phnom Penh, trafficking investigator Alex (Dermot Mulroney) and his wife, Claire (Mira Sorvino), set out to rescue young girls amid an uncooperative local police force and lax cultural attitudes toward the problem.

As Alex and his team attempt to bring down some of the perpetrators, including a psychotic ringleader named Duke (brilliantly portrayed by Trieu Tran), Alex is informed that, despite his noble efforts, he fights a losing battle because of the countless impoverished families willing to do whatever it takes to survive. He sees firsthand how even women and children who escape the brothels often re-enter the industry just to provide for their families. And as long as there is demand for it, local predators will find a way to supply it.

Trade of Innocents isn't a feel-good movie by any stretch of the imagination. It is a dark, disturbing look at the reality of the sex-slave trade in Southeast Asia. It is, however, a compelling film that speaks to the heart of getting involved to help innocent young girls and boys escape their daily horror. The film challenges Christians and nonbelievers alike to take action and be advocates for those who don't have a voice.

Rated PG-13, the movie is scattered with implied violence, most of which is off-screen. *Trade of Innocents'* best attribute, however, is its stirring depiction of everyday life for millions of innocent children who need our help.

Lifelong Partnerships Begin With Friendship

Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from Jermaine Hamwright's book, *Get the .: 5 Secrets to a Healthy Christian Relationship from a Guy's-Eye View*.

Friendship First

"Love is friendship that has caught fire. It is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times. It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses."—Ann Landers

The Friendship Factor

Let's get something straight. I don't believe your partner has to be your best friend, at least not right from the start – it may take years before you regard your life partner as your best friend. But your significant other does have to be your friend.

There's no getting around it. If the friendship factor is missing, love and honesty are absent too (and we've already learned how important those attributes are). You simply can't open up to someone you don't consider a true friend.

In the absence of friendship, your relationship becomes more of a business arrangement than an open, genuine bond between two people who care about each other and want to be together. What do friends do? They hang out together and have fun. They watch out for each other. They value their friendship and work to keep it going strong.

Real friends like each other. If you don't even like the person you're with, how can you ever hope to love them? So

make sure your partner is also your friend.

The Job Search vs. the Search for a Soul Mate

I want you to reflect for a moment on your most recent job-hunting adventure. In particular, revisit the interview process. Who could forget the adrenalin-rushing, heart-pumping experience of being interviewed? No doubt you prepared well for your meeting, knowing that what you said and how you presented yourself made all the difference.

You didn't show up in flip-flops and a T-shirt, nor did you arrive without a clue about the employer. On the contrary, you dressed your absolute best to look the part, and you did your homework, learning all about the company and the position. When you spoke, you delivered the right amount of confidence – not too smug, and definitely not indecisive.

You were selective about the information you shared, making sure to shine the best light possible on your accomplishments.

In your eagerness to get the job, you didn't reveal all. I'm not saying that you lied, but I'm sure you played up your strengths and decided to keep a few things hidden. We all do that, to a degree, in an attempt to keep the upper hand. While some people might never employ these eager-to-please job-hunting tactics, it's human nature to want to sound better than our résumé puts forth.

Let's say that a guy named Alan is in the middle of an interview. When the interviewer asks, "When can you start?" he replies without hesitating, "Tomorrow!"

Why did he say that? He hasn't even quit his current job yet. His answer is enthusiastic but entirely unrealistic. Since Alan believes this is what the employer wants to hear, he takes a chance and bends the truth, figuring the company won't bring anyone on board for at least another week anyway.

In another office, where interviews are also taking place, the hiring manager wants to know that Cheryl is familiar with a certain computer application. She answers, "Absolutely!" In reality, though, Cheryl's only heard of the application. She's never used it directly. Once again, in her eagerness to get the position, she stretches the truth and says whatever the employer wants to hear. She figures she can always learn how to use the application if and when it becomes necessary.

Neither of these candidates wants to admit any inadequacies—including, in Alan's case, lack of availability. Alan and Cheryl turned to stretching the truth out of good old-fashioned fear. Both are afraid that if the prospective employer finds out the truth, they'll lose their respective jobs to other more knowledgeable candidates.

Friendship First

That All-Important First Impression

The scenarios described above are not universal in the world of business, but they have certainly occurred, especially in more cutthroat industries. Like I said, it's human nature to want to convince the hiring party that we're right for the position. In our eagerness to get that job offer, we may cover up some things. We won't say, "I really don't plan to do any overtime."

We won't reveal that getting up to speed will require a significant learning curve. We won't say, "I'm not a morning person, so don't expect much out of me until after 10 a.m." And we're certainly not going to point out that the interviewer is wearing non-matching socks.

Why? Because in a job interview, we want so badly to tell the interviewer what he or she wants to hear. Similarly, the interviewer might fail to ask the right questions and may only be interested in what we can do for the company. Either we get the job and learn quickly enough to stay on board, or we can't

keep up and are soon replaced by someone else.

Take Matt and Jane, for instance. They've been dating for a while; however, both of them have been misrepresenting themselves to the other. They like each other a great deal, and both have already decided, "This is 'The One' for me." In an attempt to "get" the other person, each one is creating a false façade and hiding behind a mask, too afraid to reveal the true Matt or the true Jane.

Matt wants very badly to be the one Jane picks. He constantly tells her things about himself – some true, others exaggerated and others completely fabricated—to impress. Jane has already decided that he's the one for her. But she still puts him to the test, always asking in one form or another, "What do you have to offer?"

Matt starts to suspect that Jane doubts his ability to deliver what she needs, so he works harder to present himself in the image she wants. The demands increase, the deceit escalates and, in the end, the pressure's too much. The relationship stops being fun. Matt feels he can never meet her expectations.

Jane feels she doesn't know the real him. Both tire of the games and go their separate ways. Had these two began their journey with honesty and friendship, instead of one-upmanship, they might still be together.

First impressions are important, but not in lieu of relationship-building honesty.