

Additionally, because Ms. Haspel as the Acting Director for CIA and the Director of National Intelligence have refused to declassify any additional information, I am unable to publically discuss her exact role in late 2002.

Furthermore, I am also unable to publically discuss the things I know she approved as a senior level supervisor at the Counterterrorism Center from 2003 to 2004 or discuss what she worked on as the chief of staff to the Deputy Director for Operations from 2005 to 2008.

Instead, I can only reference reports by former deputy counsel of the CIA, John Rizzo, that Ms. Haspel was one of "the staunchest advocates inside the [CIA] for destroying the tapes" of CIA interrogations conducted under the torture program.

I find the CIA's responses to requests for information about Ms. Haspel to be wholly inadequate. Ms. Haspel is not an undercover operative; she is the acting CIA Director seeking a Cabinet-level position.

It is unacceptable for her or the CIA to hide her behind a wall of secrecy.

I believe Senators and the American public have the right to know whether or not the nominee before us was a senior manager for a program that has been shown to be deeply flawed, as well as a number of other disturbing facts.

Without the full scope of Ms. Haspel's involvement available for public review, I do not see how this body can adequately carry out its constitutionally mandated duty to advise and consent on the president's nominee.

Proponents of Ms. Haspel's nomination have argued that she was just doing her job and following orders.

If confirmed, what would Ms. Haspel do? Would she carry out and enforce the President's directives if they would violate our Constitution and international treaties?

I am also concerned her leadership could create problems for the CIA to perform one of its core functions: cooperating with foreign governments— and European allies in particular.

Specifically, her confirmation could complicate U.S.-German relations. While the German Government has not made a public position on Ms. Haspel's nomination, Germany is strongly opposed to torture and multiple U.S. intelligence actions outlined in the Senate Intelligence torture report have already caused rifts in U.S.-German relations.

Additionally, when Ms. Haspel was promoted to CIA Deputy Director in 2017, the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, headquartered in Berlin, petitioned German prosecutors to order an arrest warrant for Haspel due to her participation in the CIA torture program.

While I understand the German Government is unlikely to issue an arrest warrant, Germans still remember that U.S. intelligence officials mistakenly abducted and tortured Khalid al-Masri, a German citizen in 2003.

Mr. Masri, a German citizen, was seized on December 31, 2003, as he entered Macedonia because he was wrongfully believe to be an Al Qaeda terrorist traveling on false German passport.

He was then turned over to the CIA, which rendered, detained, and interrogated him. After 5 months, he was dropped on a roadside in Albania.

This was a grave mistake that even Ms. Haspel acknowledged in a pre-hearing question whether the CIA ever rendered or detained suspects who were innocent by stating: "I understand that the CIA's Office of the Inspector General conducted a review of the rendition of Khalid al-Masri and determined that CIA did not meet the standard for rendition under the September 17th, 2001 Memorandum of Notification (MON)."

Even though the CIA acknowledges this mistake, it is incomprehensible that no one has been held accountable for this and other violations.

If Ms. Haspel is confirmed, it would send the wrong message to the country and to the world. It would send the wrong message that America has abdicated its moral authority. It would send the wrong message that we condone behavior that belies the conscience and the values of this nation.

When the Obama administration chose not to prosecute those involved in the CIA's torture program, they claimed we were moving forward, not backward.

To elevate a person with reportedly intimate involvement in a torture program to lead our Central Intelligence Agency would signal to our allies and our enemies that we are looking backward.

This nomination is, in effect, a referendum on whether America condones the use of torture.

If confirmed, this nominee's decisions will affect the lives and safety of all Americans.

Our job is to assess whether the nominee has the strength of character to stand up to her superiors when reckoning with violations of our rule of law and moral values.

Unfortunately, based on Ms. Haspel's record at the CIA, the lack of public transparency regarding her tenure, and the implications for America's reputation at home and abroad, I cannot support this nomination.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, National Police Week pays special honor to the law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of our citizens and communities. I am proud to cosponsor the resolution designating National Police Week as we recognize the service and spirit of all the officers who diligently exhibit what Victor Hugo called "conscience in the service of justice."

I am especially grateful for the men and women of Rhode Island's local and

State police who put their lives on the line every day to keep our families safe. As a former U.S. Attorney and State attorney general, I have worked closely with some of Rhode Island's finest police officers, and I believe they are among the best in the country. Supporting the vital mission of the police and fostering strong relationships between our communities and law enforcement was a top priority for me in those roles. Here in the Senate, I remain committed to supporting our brave law enforcement officers, their departments, and their families.

I met this week with Colonel James J. Mendonca, chief of the Central Falls Police Department and president of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association. Under his leadership, the association is working to make Rhode Island a national leader in gun violence prevention, drunk driving awareness, and community engagement.

Law enforcement officers are the guardians of our communities, often paying the ultimate price for our safety. As we recognize the service and sacrifice of the law enforcement community this National Police Week, I am particularly mindful of the names of some 50 officers from Rhode Island etched onto the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, including some Federal officers who died while on duty in Rhode Island.

In the words of the old hymn:

Now the laborer's task is o'er;
Now the battle day is past . . .
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now thy servant sleeping.

In Rhode Island and across the United States, we remember and honor their vigilance, compassion, and valor.

HMONG VETERANS' SERVICE RECOGNITION ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, as a young man, I lived with my father while he served as U.S. Ambassador to Laos. I came to know it as a heartbreakingly beautiful country, with lovely, kind people, into which our international contest with communism violently intruded.

The goal of the U.S. in Laos at the time was to prevent North Vietnamese forces from using Laos as a supply line for attacks on South Vietnam, along what was known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and to prevent Laos itself from falling under Communist domination by the Pathet Lao forces.

So began a covert war in Laos, funded by the CIA, in which at least 35,000 Lao and Hmong perished.

The legendary Hmong military leader, General Vang Pao, operated out of a base at Long Tieng in the mountains of Laos. He told the New York Times in 2008, "There were three missions that were very important that were given to us and to me. . . . One was stopping the flow of the North Vietnamese troops through the Ho Chi Minh Trail to go to the south through Laos. Second was to rescue any American pilots during the

Vietnam war. Third, to protect the Americans that navigated the B-52s and the jets to bomb North Vietnam.”

After the war, thousands of displaced Hmong refugees were obliged to flee Laos. They fled into Thailand, to countries in Europe, and—in many cases—to the United States. My State of Rhode Island is proud to have had many settle and build their lives in our communities.

The Hmong Veterans’ Service Recognition Act passed into law this year, finally allowing naturalized Hmong- and Laotian-American veterans to be buried in U.S. national cemeteries. I am grateful to my fellow Rhode Islander Philip Smith of the Lao Veterans of America for his determined advocacy on behalf of Hmong and Lao veterans.

Twenty-one years ago, the Clinton administration authorized a plaque to be placed at Arlington National Cemetery commemorating the valor of the Lao soldiers who aided American forces during the Vietnam war. It is a fitting honor for those brave combat veterans that they lie beside old comrades-in-arms, a way of keeping the promise inscribed on this memorial plaque, which pledges that the Hmong and Lao veterans’ “patriotic valor and loyalty in the defense of liberty and democracy will never be forgotten.”

After my father retired, he heard that local opposition had arisen to a proposed Lao temple not far from here in Virginia. He went with his military aide and CIA station chief from the Laos days to testify at the local hearing. The military aide was General Richard Trefry, then the commander of White House military operations, who in full military regalia testified that, without the courageous Lao resistance, led by Vang Pao out of the base at Long Tieng, there would be 1,000 more American names on the Vietnam War Memorial.

It is with that sense of abiding gratitude that we remember the bravery of those Hmong troops and their dedication to fight for democracy and to protect the lives of so many young Americans at war in Southeast Asia.

TRIBUTE TO SHARON JACKSON

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about Sharon Jackson, a former member of my staff who recently left to pursue another opportunity in public service.

Sharon was part of the original team in my State offices that I hired after being sworn into the Senate in January 2015.

She served as a constituent relations representative, where her compassion and authenticity reassured constituents as she worked to resolve their issues with various Federal agencies. Being an Army veteran herself, Sharon had a unique gift of connecting with veterans and servicemembers while she helped them navigate complex government systems. The difference she made

in the lives of so many people is immeasurable.

Sharon provided insight into the issues small businesses face in Alaska. Her past work with National Write Your Congressman and the National Federation of Independent Businesses put her in tune with the passions and concerns of Alaska’s small businesses.

She was also a very involved community member in Anchorage and Eagle River, contributing her time and energy to a variety of organizations with the intention of building a better and brighter future for our great State.

Sharon was a true pleasure to have on the team. She loves Alaska, and that always showed in her passionate advocacy on behalf of constituents. She loves her family and is a devoted wife and mother.

We will miss Sharon and the joy she had helping Alaskans. I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO AMANDA BEDFORD

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Amanda Bedford for her positive impact on the Chouteau County community as the owner of the Wake Cup Cafe.

Amanda grew up on her parent’s farm between Fort Benton and Highwood. She always had a passion for the Fort Benton community, knowing 1 day that was where she wanted to open a coffee shop. At 20 years old and with the support of her parents, she made that dream a reality. Fourteen years later, the business has seen tremendous success and growth under Amanda’s leadership.

What started as a tiny coffee shop, serving only coffee and a few sandwiches, has since expanded greatly. The current building is the restaurant’s third location, with a much larger and more expansive menu. By focusing on fresh, homemade ingredients, Amanda is proud of the delicious food the Wake Cup Cafe brings to Fort Benton.

With the enormous growth the Wake Cup Cafe has seen, Amanda has turned it into a family business. As of 4 years ago, Amanda’s sister and brother-in-law have become part owners in the business, allowing them to continue to grow the coffee shop. While the business continues to expand, Amanda remains focused on providing the community with a place to gather with family and friends. As Amanda says, every small town needs a coffee shop. She is proud to be that staple for the Fort Benton community.

I congratulate Amanda Bedford on her wonderful impact to Fort Benton and the greater Chouteau Community. With her passion, dedication, and determination, her community is brought together over their favorite local hangout: the Wake Cup Cafe.●

TRIBUTE TO DENIS O’HAYER

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I am proud to honor in the RECORD a dedicated Georgian who has elevated media political coverage and served as a true ambassador of the First Amendment.

It is not every day that a politician honors a journalist on the floor of the Senate, but when one who is as accomplished as Denis O’Hayer of Georgia announces his upcoming retirement, it is only right to recognize his 40 years of radio and TV work and achievements.

Denis O’Hayer will retire next month from Atlanta’s National Public Radio affiliate, WABE, where he has hosted of a number of programs since he joined the station 2009. Since 2015, Denis has gotten the day started for countless Atlantans who tune in for his news updates on “Morning Edition.” The listenership for his program has more than doubled since he took the helm as host. His podcast, “Political Breakfast,” is a more recent hit and shows Denis’s adaptability and one of the many reasons for his success in the field of broadcast journalism.

Denis began his work in the Atlanta media market in 1978 in radio with WGST and as a host with Public Broadcasting Atlanta after moving to the city from his radio career in Connecticut.

During his distinguished career, Denis has also worked in television as a freelance reporter with CNN and as a political reporter at Atlanta NBC affiliate WXIA-TV for 11 years.

The Atlanta Press Club, which is one of the largest and most active professional journalism associations in the country, has benefitted from Denis’s leadership as president.

Denis, his distinguished WABE colleague Rose Scott, and their team earned an Edward R. Murrow award in 2012 for their television broadcast special focused on the fight against child sex trafficking in Atlanta called “How to Stop the Candy Shop.”

The Georgia Association of Broadcasters named Denis Broadcaster of the Year in 2014, and in 2015, he was named to the Atlanta Press Club Hall of Fame.

Denis is respected by colleagues across the spectrum for the quality of his work, his professionalism, and the fact that he is a consummate gentleman. My staff has always praised Denis, and we have looked for ways to work together whenever possible.

Over the years, in addition to politics both local and national, Denis and I forged a friendship and respect for each other that went beyond work, regularly sharing reports about our families and discussing our shared enjoyment of travel.

I wish Denis the very best of luck in his retirement, and I am thankful that he will continue to contribute to Georgia politics as a commentator in the future. Our political discourse will be better for it.●