

Rebroadcast of Hagels' Return to Vietnam in "Echoes of War" on NET Television

Former Nebraska U.S. Senator Chuck Hagel and his brother return to Vietnam and visit the battlefields where they fought and bled in the 1999-produced NET Television documentary, "Echoes of War," airing Friday, Jan. 25, at 7:30 p.m. CT on NET1 and NET-HD. The program will repeat Sunday, Jan. 27, at 12:30 p.m. CT and Friday, Feb. 1, at 7 p.m. CT on NET1/HD.

Hagel -- currently nominated by President Barack Obama for U.S. Defense Secretary and a Nebraska Republican -- was a 21-year-old foot soldier when he was assigned to the Army's Ninth Infantry Division in Vietnam in 1968. His brother, Tom, now a law professor at the University of Dayton, Ohio, was 19 years old when he joined his brother's platoon a few months later. The Nebraska natives saw extensive combat and both were wounded during the Vietnam conflict.

The brothers returned to Vietnam in 1999 when Chuck Hagel participated in ceremonies opening the new U.S. Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City. Although the consulate dedication marked a foreign policy decision to put the war in the past, the Hagels' found that their return to Vietnam placed memories of the war very much in front of them.

"Echoes of War" accompanies the Hagels as they walk the battlefields of 1968 and describe powerful, emotion-laden memories: a booby trap that decimated their patrol, a mine that destroyed their armored personnel carrier, a sniper who shot down a helicopter. More powerful yet are the memories they have of fellow soldiers who fought -- and sometimes died -- alongside them.

The program reveals the brothers' conflicting view of their experience -- Chuck Hagel believed the war constituted a holding action against communism and provided other nations in the region with the time to stave off communist insurgencies, while Tom Hagel believed the war served no good purpose and might deter young people from serving in the military.

In December 2011, the Librarian of Congress Dr. James H. Billington honored the Hagels, along with NET, for contributing hours of archival field videos from "Echoes of War" to commence the Vietnam Veterans Collections Campaign for the Library. The Veterans History Project of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, collects, preserves and makes accessible the personal accounts of America's war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from them and better understand the realities of war.

"Echoes of War" is a production of NET Television, a service of NET. For a complete program schedule, visit NET's website netNebraska.org/television.

RELEASE WRITTEN BY: Larry L. Kubert, 402-472-9333, ext. 389, or e-mail at lkubert@netNebraska.org